

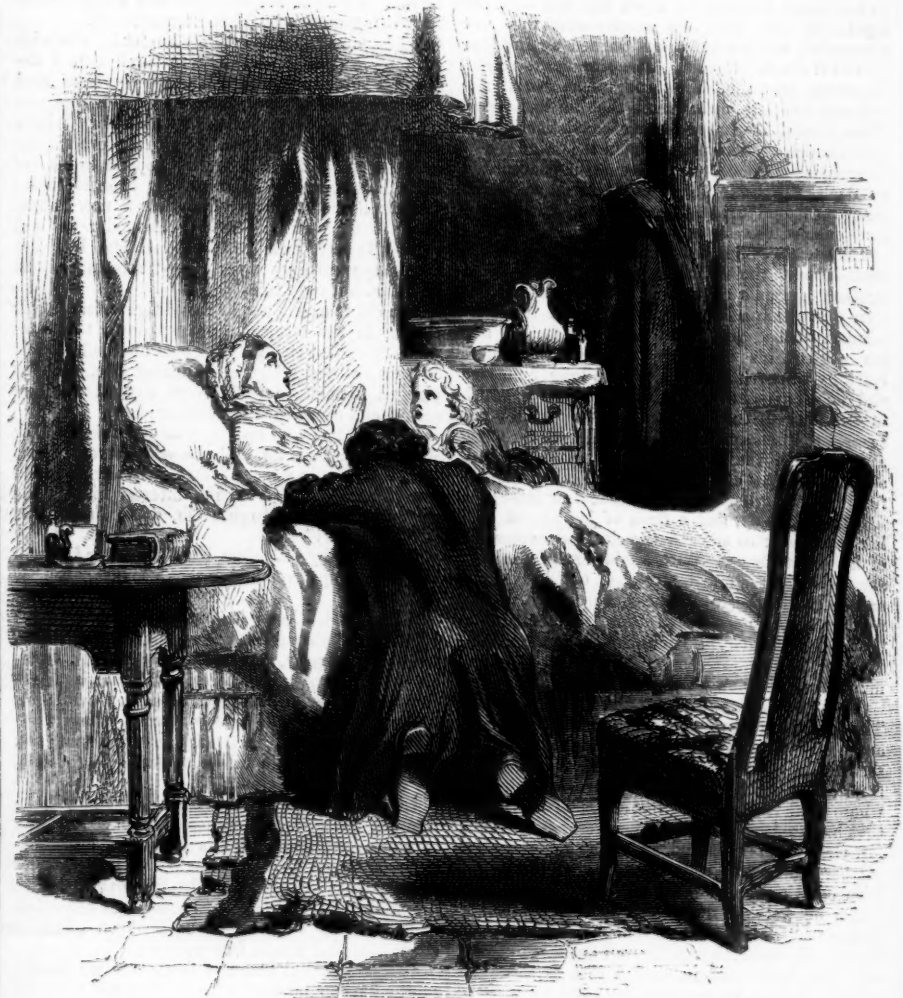
# THE LEISURE HOUR.

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THE DEATH-BED SCENE.

## THE NEGLECTED WIFE.

CHAPTER IV.

ALIGHTING in the *portone*, or entrance, Herbert hurried up the staircase, never pausing in his haste till he reached the landing before his door, No. 157, 1854.

when, on applying the key, he softly pushed it open, and treading lightly not to alarm Rose, by bursting too suddenly upon her, entered the hall.

Not to alarm Rose! What a change had come over him in a few minutes! He dreaded to see her

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almost; a cold dew hung upon his forehead, and his hands worked convulsively. There was a stillness in the house which contrasted strangely with the scene he had just quitted; to him it seemed ominous of the deeper silence of the grave.

A light was burning in the room, beyond which was the one where Rose generally sat, but he scarcely had courage to enter; at length he noiselessly approached, and standing at some distance, contemplated her unobserved. She was leaning over a table, drawn near the sofa; her desk and some papers were spread open, and she appeared to have been writing, for a pen still wet with ink lay beside her; but this employment was now suspended, and her hand was pressed against her side as if she felt in pain. The significant action, the worn face, the hollow cough—he saw it all; yet saw too late, dull wretch that he had been! How fearful is that unerring conviction of the worst which suddenly seizes upon the mind; how it excludes all hope, how it seems to concentrate in itself all the intensity of anguish which we fancy a gradual course of preparation could alone have enabled us resignedly to bear!

Like scales falling from his eyes, so vanished in that instant the delusions which the inherent egotism of man's unrenowned nature, joined to his own overweening love of the world and thirst for admiration, had tended so fatally to foster; and his neglect, his culpability, arrayed themselves fearfully before him. The love so long unheeded and forsaken—the memories of early days, which in the feverish turmoil of his subsequent life had seemed too tame and insipid to recall—all thronged upon him in that agonising retrospect, as, soul-stricken, he now came forward, and called mournfully on her by her name—"Rose! dear Rose!"

She looked up, and a flush of joy spread over her wan cheek as she saw the changed expression of his countenance. With a faint cry of pleasure, she raised herself and stretched out her arms; and he clasped her to his heart once more. They neither of them spoke, but those scorching tears that fell upon her face pleaded enough for him. Herbert, her own Herbert had returned, and Rose must leave him now!

Yes, leave him she must, and soon, too soon! The agitation of that day told fearfully upon her, and a slow fever, which had now established itself, seemed daily hastening her to the grave. Passing from one extreme to the other, her husband, from whose eyes had dropped the scales of selfishness that had so long blinded him, never left her side. Dr. Grey came again and again, his anger against Herbert somewhat softened by the sight of his deep contrition, and the anxious tenderness with which he watched every change in Rose's state. It was a bitter trial for this kind man to be obliged to leave Florence, though he well knew his utmost skill was ineffectual in such a case as this. To satisfy Herbert, rather than from the prospect of any relief that could be afforded, another English physician had been called in consultation, and to his care Dr. Grey now committed his patient. The same system of caution, the same necessity for "keeping up the spirits" of the poor sufferer, was strictly enjoined by the new adviser (surely such a practice, however kindly meant by medical men, is not defensible), so that although her hus-

band was forbidden to indulge any hope of her recovery, he was compelled to maintain the miserable deception of appearing to do so in her presence.

When Dr. Grey bade her farewell, he had sufficient command of himself to preserve a cheerful aspect, and a steady tone of voice, while Herbert, overcome by his feelings, had abruptly left the room. It was then that Rose placed a letter in his hand, which she begged him to convey to her father. She told him she commenced it the night after his first arrival, and had continued it at intervals, as well as her strength and opportunities for writing unseen by Herbert, permitted.

"I have not shown it to my husband," she added, "for I do not wish him to think that I despond; but had I waited longer—Dear kind friend, win for me my father's pardon! See him if you can, and say how I love him, how I have always loved him! entreat him to believe me, for indeed what I affirm is truth! Speak to him of little Hugh, and of Herbert, my poor Herbert! tell him how kind, how devoted he is now to me. Is he not patient, is he not all tenderness and care? Doctor, dear doctor"—and she laid her hand supplicatingly upon his—"remember, tell him this, but *only* this."

The old man felt a convulsive tightening in his throat, in the struggle to keep down the tears which were fast rising in his eyes at this last trait of Rose's all-forgiving, all-enduring love, while he pledged himself to fulfil every request she had named and every wish she had implied.

"May a blessing rest on you for this, and for all you have done for us," she said, fervently, and then resumed, in a more tremulous voice: "Mind and speak to him of Hugh; interest him on his behalf—my noble Hugh. Oh, doctor, my heart fails me there!"

"Leave thy fatherless ones to me, and I will bring them up; 'remember that promise, my poor child!"

"I know it, I know it; but all is dark at times; I have no realising faith; my soul is cast down, and though I pray, and that earnestly, yet I tremble while I pray. Hugh is so passionate, so high-spirited, so loving, and so sensitive; while his father knows so little how to manage him. Herbert, too, is young, and may marry again, and then if a stranger should be harsh to Hugh! Oh, my child, my little child!"

Her composure gave way here, and she broke into bitter weeping; but there was no opportunity to say more, for Herbert's step was heard approaching, and Dr. Grey knew that the hour for his departure had arrived. Bending over her with indescribable pity and affection, he bade her adieu, and went his way, conscious that on earth he should see that gentle face no more.

It was a fearful blank to Herbert when he was gone; he had no one to whom he could open his heart, and pour forth its exceeding bitterness. The gay acquaintances of society, the associates of hours upon which, in his present frame of mind, it was agony for him to dwell, all kept aloof in this time of trial; but he heeded not their absence, nor cared for their companionship. They could not have sympathised with his misery, and in the moodiness of his feelings he would have considered

their presence an intrusion at the side of one so unworldly as his Rose. Alone, then, he remained—alone in the vain effort to rekindle the embers of the flame his own neglect had suffered to expire; alone to watch, to suffer, to regret, as well as to speak brightly and hopefully of recovery to his dying wife!

She would listen to him with a calm and gentle sweetness in her face, not trusting herself to pluck away the hope she still fancied lingering in his heart, though she yearned to speak to him of the parting which must soon befall—that from thence they might together learn to prepare for a meeting beyond the grave. But when she heard him dwelling on happy days to come, she dared not tell him that those visions on earth could never be realised for her, far less breathe the thought which sometimes crossed her, that if prepared for the great change, it was better thus to die, so loving and united, than recover to test the stability of his resolves. It was not that she mistrusted her husband's repentance; but she had suffered so intensely, her life had been such a prolonged disappointment, that the spring of hope seemed crushed, and she would have quailed at again encountering the ordeal of the mocking, heartless world, and its baneful, treacherous allurements. And yet she had forgiven, nay more, she had well nigh forgotten all! She welcomed back the tenderness so tardily revived without one reproach or retrospection; his past years of coldness and error were as a sealed book between them, for in her great pitying love she forbore to dwell upon all she had undergone, nor added poignancy to his self-accusations.

A great and silent change, however, had for some time been passing in Rose. In the school of affliction, early religious impressions had revived; and disappointed, like so many others, with the world, she had turned to him who has invited the weary and heavy laden to seek consolation in him, and at the foot of his cross had found that peace which she had ineffectually sought elsewhere. Her first step of disobedience to her parent she could now submissively see had been righteously chastened, and her husband's neglect appeared but the due reward of the idolatrous affection which had given to him that *first* place in her heart which was due to the Creator alone. It will not be wondered at, then, that with these feelings she used to pray deeply and fervently for her husband and her child—pray for them both unceasingly—pray in the solitude of her heart, when her feeble arm was wound round Herbert's neck, as he sat by her bed-side, and held her hand in his, and still talked on of the spring, and the country, and returning health.

And so they went on, the sands sinking lower and lower in the glass; till one night the pent-up anguish of her soul burst forth, and all was revealed. The child, as usual, had knelt before her, and repeated his simple prayers, when his mother drew him to her side, and raising the curls that clustered round his fair open brow, looked into his eyes with a lingering, wistful fondness, as if wishing to leave her own reflection ineffaceably mirrored there; then suddenly she cried out in bitter sorrow, "My child, my child, who will teach you to pray when I am gone?"

At those words, and at that cry, Herbert sprang forward to her side, covering his face, while his breast heaved with convulsive sobs.

"Oh, Herbert," said Rose, as her trembling hands sought to draw him towards her; "forgive me those tears, that grief, which I have just called forth. But I am passing away, dearest; I have known, I have felt it long. It was hard to tell you this—hard to acknowledge it even to myself, now that I sometimes think life might be again so blessed. Yet it is better so; we have now no secrets between us; we know that we must part; but, oh, Herbert! tell me that we shall meet again; tell me that my prayers have been at last heard, and that you have resolved henceforth to seek your God!"

He could not speak, but buried his face deeper in her pillow, and she went on:—"There have been times when hope forsook me. I thought the prayers of a disobedient child could not be answered; but then again I remembered that God despises not a broken and contrite heart, and I offered that to him. I soon ceased to pray for earthly happiness. I felt that was not to be my portion; but I prayed for you, for my own and your eternal good; for our child, that he may be preserved amid the rude storms and trials which perhaps await him; and for myself, that ere I died light might spring out of darkness, and faith kindle its torch in your heart.

"I am but a weak, erring woman, and you may say that a child who has rebelled against her father is little qualified to direct towards the all-seeing and righteous Judge. I have been conscious of all this; it has long kept me silent, and I dared not urge or remonstrate with you; but I must speak now, dear Herbert. I cannot say, 'Peace, peace,' to this fluttering heart, till I see you resolved to renounce an ensnaring world, and make the Christian's hope your own."

Again she paused, and raising herself on her pillow, tried to part the hands which he still kept pressed over his eyes, and strove to soothe the paroxysm of sorrow he was unable to subdue. It was the woman wooing even in death—wooing him to an eternity of love, inviting him to seek with her a bright heritage in heaven.

Suddenly, a smile beamed upon her wan face, as a few broken whispers reached her ear, and an expression of ineffable devotion lit up her fading eyes. It seemed to her as if her tears and supplications had, through the great Intercessor, been accepted, and had gone up before her as a memorial unto heaven, and the hope of years was now attained. Humbled, stricken as a little child, Herbert murmured—"Rose, pray for—pray with me!" And she prayed.

The voice of the dying woman broke the stillness of the night, as its feeble accents rose to the throne of mercy. Angels might have hung rejoicing over those sounds, and swept their golden lyres in sainted jubilee, for the sighing of a contrite heart accompanied that supplication.

Who could have viewed that hallowed scene, and not bow before the mighty power of religion? The wife stretched upon the bed from which she was destined never more to rise, bound with all a woman's tenderness to earth by the holiest affections; yet strong in her Christian faith, undis-

mayed by the dread struggle which was approaching, triumphing over the weakness of her nature, and able to impart, not seek for courage—to give lessons of consolation and submission, and teach her husband the way to live, by showing him how to be prepared to die!

For a few days more Rose lingered; a few days more ere the silver cord was loosed, and the golden bowl was broken at the fountain. A letter from her father came, according her his entire forgiveness, breathing the utmost love and solicitude, and promising as soon as his infirm health permitted him to travel, to hasten to Florence to be with her. Dr. Grey had effectually pleaded her cause, and worked upon the heart which had hitherto been so stern and unrelenting; her last injunction, too, had been obeyed, for Herbert was spoken of in terms of kindness; and Hugh, her golden-haired Hugh, her father told her, should be the child of his old age, and cherished for her sake. And then, as if the feelings so long stifled had only acquired greater intensity from being repressed, the old man softened into language of the deepest affection, conjuring her to live, to live that her smiles might again gladden his existence, and picturing forth the happiness of their re-union.

She wept when she read those lines, and for a little space felt it was hard now to leave a world where such unlooked-for joy might have been her portion; and the fainting spirit yearned for a longer sojourn amidst those she had loved so well. But as the sun shines forth more radiant from the passing cloud which has veiled its brightness, so was more beautifully revealed the depth of her faith and the sublimity of her hope, when surmounting this last trial. No word of murmur or repining ever escaped her lips, as remembering always the early error of her life, she acknowledged the justice of her sentence; she had been chastened by many tears, by sorrows long and meekly borne; and now in her passage through the dark valley of the shadow of death, she found a heavenly arm to strengthen and to guide. Yea, even for her son, the anguish so long gnawing at her heart, the forebodings which even her husband might not share, were finally laid at rest; having been cast at the feet of Him who had compassion on a mother's grief, and who, touched with the sense of our infirmities, knew the dangers and temptations which would beset his path, unshielded by her love, unguarded by her presence.

To Herbert, each day that she was spared was as a long farewell. During the brief intervals of sleep, which the influence of opiates obtained for her, he was never absent from her side; she would entreat him to take a little rest, and he pretended to obey; yet ere long, stealing back into her room, he would count every breath she drew, and gently raising the transparent hand extended on the coverlet, would lay it upon his own, as if fancying that the life and vigour which throbbled within his veins could communicate a transient energy to hers. In those hours of suffering and restlessness, which were the forerunners of dissolution, it was his lips which read to her the words of life that were now her choicest food; it was his hand which supported the weary head, and stayed the wasted form, which seemed to find no repose save when near him. The only stranger who broke the

sacredness of that closing scene was the clergyman whom Rose had asked to see, and who at her request came constantly to visit her. Except the hour of his daily visit, however, the husband and wife were left alone: the one, with a faith that looked beyond time, was striving to prepare the other for eternity.

As the end approached, the timid woman, through life so shrinking, so easily subdued, committing her soul to the Redeemer, now met the final conflict with calm and holy courage, as if she had made death familiar to her vision, and could smile even in nature's agony. And thus she died! her child's kiss upon her cheek, her husband's arms around her; her last look was love, her last accent prayer!

Florence was no longer the place for Herbert. He quitted it with his child, and, returning to England, pursued an honourable career of art. Through life, however, Rose's memory and her dying counsels remained with him, and gave a new direction to his being.

#### PRINCE MICHAEL WORONZOFF.

In its long struggle with the mountain races of the Caucasus, Russia, with all her innumerable hosts and scientific generals, has succeeded in subjecting to her sway only those whose residences in the plains made a long resistance to her mighty power impossible. As army after army was defeated, and general after general dismissed by their imperious master, with whom failure seemed to be only another name for incapacity, this want of success was attributed to the jealousy which existed between the different corps of the army and their generals, as well as that between the latter and the governor-general. To put an end to all doubt on the matter, the emperor, in 1844, determined to concentrate the supreme power in the hands of one man. His choice fell upon count Michael Woronzoff, whom he made governor over an extent of territory exceeding that of any European kingdom, with the sole exception of Russia itself. The power of the new governor was absolute. The commission which sat at St. Petersburg for the management of Circassian affairs was on his account dissolved; he was made independent of the war minister, and responsible only to the emperor himself, but with full power to act as he might judge best, without even waiting for his especial consent or opinion. Power was given him over life and death of the natives, over the appointment and dismissal of his subordinates, and he could distribute rewards and distinctions in the army without consulting his master. Never in the history of Russia, since Catharine II's favourite, the all-powerful Potemkin, has such unbounded authority been invested in the hands of one individual. It exceeds even that of Paskiewitch as governor of Poland. His name, it will be recollected, has frequently occurred in connection with the operations of our troops in the Crimea, his beautiful country-house having been ransacked by the Tartars.

Michael Woronzoff was born at St. Petersburg,



in May, 1782. His father went soon after as Catharine's ambassador to England. Having fallen into disgrace under her capricious successor Paul, he remained in England as a private gentleman till he died, and thus his son received an English education. On Alexander's accession to the throne, he recalled the young count, who received an official appointment at court. But his English education was not without its effect, and he soon became thoroughly disgusted with the fawning and cringing artifices and intrigues of the Russian court nobility, whose only aim was to aggrandize themselves by these unworthy means. He begged permission to join the army. His destination, though it laid the foundation of his future greatness, seemed like a second banishment, for he was sent to join the army in Circassia. There his talent soon brought him into notice, and he rose rapidly, while he acquired that knowledge of the people and country which has since rendered him so capable of filling the high post he occupies. He took part in the eventful wars at the commencement of this century, and rose in 1810 to the rank of major-general, the consequence of his gallant actions in the war against the Turks.

When Napoleon commenced his great campaign against Russia, the latter hastily concluded a peace with Turkey, and Woronzoff played a part in the concluding act of the fearful tragedy. The retreat from Moscow had already begun, when the Moldau army, to which Woronzoff belonged, came up; and from the Beresina to Königsberg he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with war in its most terrible phases. The English and Prussians at Waterloo decided the fate of Napoleon; the Russians came too late to be of any service beyond occupying the French frontiers. Woronzoff was now at liberty to return to his native country; but what he had seen there only confirmed his predilection for England and its institutions; and, demanding furlough for an indefinite period, he sought the free shores of Britain, and remained her guest till 1823.

The liberal ideas which Alexander had at first embraced having fallen into disrepute in Russia, it was generally believed that Woronzoff was living in England in a sort of half-banishment. But the talents, and perhaps still more the honesty of the count, could not be dispensed with in a country where both, and the latter especially, are so rare amongst government officials. He was recalled from England to fill the important post of governor-general of Bessarabia and the provinces north of the Black Sea. He fixed his residence at Odessa, which under his government increased rapidly in beauty and importance, having tripled its population, and in commerce distanced every port on the Black Sea. It is indebted to him for its arcades, its magnificent palace, and the splendid flight of steps leading from the quay down to the sea, and which he built at the cost of 800,000 silver roubles. Besides these, innumerable other noble edifices owe their rise to his influence and encouragement. Indeed Woronzoff's English education has not

been able to instil into his mind the principle, that the elegant and beautiful should follow the useful and necessary rather than precede them; and, like the Russians in general, and other continental nations, he cares more about a brilliant surface than such qualities as will confer a real and lasting benefit on the people. Odessa, for instance, is ill-supplied with water, and it is said that, in the summer months, a good glass of wine often does not cost so much as a good glass of water. To a high official person of Odessa, who pointed out to him the evils and nuisances which swarmed in filthy exuberance amidst the dazzling splendour of palaces, Woronzoff replied with a smile: "I provide for the grand and beautiful; the useful and necessary will come of themselves in the course of time." That this maxim will not hold good we need not assert to any one who has travelled through eastern cities, where the useful is so long in making its appearance as to justify us in saying that it will never come at all.

Nor was the creative activity of Woronzoff confined to Odessa, but extended itself to every province under his command. The uninhabited steppes north of the Black Sea, deserted by the inhabitants when Russia added the territory to her empire, have, under his influence, begun to fill with people again.

The German colonies have prospered under his protection, and by him the Tartars have been induced to take up their residence in villages, and devote themselves to agriculture.

In the Crimea, too, vineyards have been planted at an immense expense, and the southern slopes of the mountains have been brought into cultivation. There, too, may now be seen gothic palaces, fountains, Turkish edifices, and Italian villas, alternating with the humble dwellings of the Tartars.

In spite of this prosperous government, it was thought that Woronzoff was not in high favour at St. Petersburg, when, to the surprise of all, and for the reasons above stated, he was appointed to the high post of which we have spoken at the commencement of this article. Those who were placed under his power were not long in experiencing the justice and the severity of the new government. With all the energy of genius he set about cleansing the Augean stable. A number of officers, who had amassed fortunes by cheating the government, were brought to justice, a crowd of peculating officials dismissed from their posts, hospitals and barracks placed under strict surveillance, robber after robber ended his lawless career on the gallows, and the nominal statement of the army, always greater in Russia than the reality, was made to tally with its actual condition. But his most difficult task, as it is that of all reformers, was to find proper instruments to execute his vast projects of improvement; he succeeded, however, in forming them to his will under the united effect of firmness and kindness.

Woronzoff was ordered by the emperor to abandon the tardy system of warfare followed by his predecessors, and to carry on the war against Circassia with all possible vigour. To

enable him to do this with effect, his army was raised to 150,000 men. Daryo, the residence of Schamyl, was to be taken at all hazards.

The expedition was undertaken, and, it is said, against Woronzoff's private judgment. The fortress was taken, it is true; but on his return his army was so vigorously attacked by the Circassians, under cover of their thick forests, that, in spite of their numerical superiority, the Russians were completely routed and put to flight. It is probable that their army would have been annihilated but for the service of Circassian spies in Russian pay, who succeeded in carrying to general Freytag an order to hasten to its assistance. An eye-witness relates that the Russian soldiers wept with joy when they saw general Freytag's division approaching, which was to save them from utter destruction. This time defeat did not bring disgrace in its train, and the emperor, convinced that Woronzoff had done all that mortal man could effect, raised him to the rank of prince.

Prince Woronzoff now represented to the emperor, with whom he had an interview at Sebastopol, that it was necessary to follow a more cautious system of warfare, and to renounce for ever the idea of subduing Circassia at one blow.

From this time the Russians made only such expeditions as circumstances called for, and acted principally on the defensive, erecting fortresses, and clearing away the forest for a considerable distance on both sides of the road leading from one fortress to another; for it was the shelter afforded by these impenetrable woods that enabled the Circassians to inflict such terrible losses on their enemy. It has been asserted by Russian writers that this system of forts and clearage will eventually lead to the subjection of the country; but, judging from the late successes of Schamyl, it is doubtful whether the system can ever be extended to the mountain fastnesses of the interior.

But Woronzoff recommended another plan. Well knowing that unity gives strength, he recommended above all things that they should endeavour to destroy the national unity, and while endeavouring to sow disunion among the chiefs, divide the power of Schamyl by attacking him from different points at once. He endeavoured also to secure the allegiance of the chiefs who had only been in part subdued, by distributing considerable presents among them. But the greatest number of adherents he gained by permitting fathers to sell their daughters as slaves, the abolition of which commerce by the Russians had caused great dissatisfaction among Circassian fathers, to whom it was a source of considerable profit. Woronzoff, well aware of the iniquity of his measure, sought to soothe his conscience, in some degree, by allowing it only when the sale took place with the free will and consent of the daughter herself. We need scarcely remark that the power of a father over his child, and that child a young female, renders this restriction almost useless.

It is, however, said that Circassian maidens willingly suffer themselves to be sold as slaves to Turkey, and to Constantinople especially, where their personal attractions and mental superiority often enable them to obtain considerable influence; and many examples have been known of their returning to their native country with considerable fortunes. Circassian beauty is proverbial; but a glance at a cargo of Circassian girls, as they arrive at Constantinople after their voyage from Trebisonde, would at once dispel the poetical halo which has in our minds ever encircled them. The object of the parents in selling them being profit, they would lessen their gain by clothing them well; hence a ragged garment, with a piece of linen to wrap round their shoulders, is often their only covering. The slave-merchant, intent upon profit, and with that narrow-mindedness and stupidity which prevents his seeing that the price of his wares would be proportionate to their good condition, feeds them only on water and a kind of millet pap. During the voyage they are separated from the other passengers, and huddled together in filth and abominations between the decks, like a cargo of negro slaves. The result may be easily imagined. They arrive at Constantinople in a disgusting state, affected with diseases of the skin and infested with vermin. If the seller wish to turn his wares into money as speedily as possible, which is not unfrequently the case, he merely throws a cloak over their shoulders and takes them at once to the market. The purchasers keep at a respectful distance from their bargain, and drive them before them, like sheep, to one of the many establishments kept by old women, whose profession it is to cleanse these unfortunate creatures. It is only on quitting these establishments, cured of all cutaneous disease, clean, and well dressed, that is to be detected some of that beauty in face and figure which is of such extended renown. Measures have recently been taken for putting a stop altogether to this nefarious traffic.

In person, prince Woronzoff is of middle stature; his countenance displays no marked characteristic; while his low forehead would, to a superficial observer, seem to be incompatible with the genius he has so often displayed in the exalted and responsible post he occupies. He is simple in his habits and dress, and might often be seen in the streets of Tiflis, the former seat of his government, in a simple military cap and a worn-out cloak. Like an acute politician, however, he knew how to dazzle the minds of the orientals with pomp and display, when it was necessary, and he has occasionally given festivals of greater splendour than were ever witnessed in the land before. But he does not neglect nobler means to serve his master. Kind and affable in private life, upright in his actions, and impartial in his judgments, he aimed at being a father and friend to all classes, and to all the different nationalities under his sway. The Russians even maintain, that in doubtful cases he would frequently decide against his countrymen. His attainments are very considerable, and he is well acquainted with the literature of Europe.

To conclude in the words of a German writer: "He is one of the noblest and most upright men of Russia; and while still an admirer of English institutions and an enemy to the court life of St. Petersburg, he has ever succeeded in preserving the favour of the emperor."

#### A VISIT TO THE MONASTERY OF ST. BERNARD,

THE HIGHEST HABITATION IN EUROPE.

It was in the middle of July, 1851, that I reached St. Pierre, a village at the foot of the snow-clad upper Alps, on my way, with five friends, from Martigny (the ancient Roman Octodurum), to the monastery of St. Bernard. No one who has accomplished this pilgrimage ever forgets the Plan de Proz, on which you enter in an hour after leaving St. Pierre. In winter, this plain is a fearful place. It is surrounded on all sides by heights. The avalanches sweep it through and through, cross each other, and inevitably destroy any passer in the course. Every year some perish, as necessity forces travellers to attempt the pass even in the worst months. Here all wheel-conveyances must stop, as there is no other path than among blocks of stone, scattered in confusion, through which you must find your way as you best can for half an hour. At first it seemed impossible to advance a step, but suddenly an opening was spied, and we began to scale the Alps. All vegetation now disappeared; bare black rocks, fields of ice and snow, deep precipices, and tall poles here and there to indicate the direction of the way, were all that could be seen, except one gloomy-looking building, with a grated window and a door ajar. This is a refuge, and by it is a *morgue* with many a dead body of the frozen traveller. We shuddered and passed on. Weariness and some dejection began to be felt, seeing which, our porter offered his mule, and one of the party—an old excursionist who had learnt to take care of himself—soon accepted it. But the wisest is sometimes caught. He was just showing a kind of patronizing pity towards the trampers below, and begging them to lay hold of his mule's tail for assistance through the snow, when, in a soft place, in goes the poor beast up to the haunches, and in his struggle to get out, throws our good friend some six yards over his head. The hero, however, will not wait for compliments, but mounts again, and very soon repeats his adventure. This is enough for one day, and no one will have any more to do with the mule, but all determine fairly to trudge it out.

Sunset has come. We feel the importance of pressing on before dark, but the rarity of the air at nearly 8000 feet high thoroughly tries the manhood of every one, and the stoutest of the company is brought to a stand for awhile. It begins to rain, our feet are soaked, the cold becomes piercing, and darkness is near, when a shout comes from those a-head, "The monastery is in sight!" Care is now over; at eight o'clock we reach the welcome rest.

I happened to be the first at the stone steps and found a monk on the top waiting to receive

us. Never had I been more mistaken in my anticipations. I thought to see a tall, hale, rough, stern old man; but here was a pleasant, ruddy, smiling, gentlemanly host, of about thirty years old, who gave me his hand, and welcomed me to the monastery. I told him we were six, and asked if all could be accommodated. "Oh, yes," said he, "we have room for many. But you must be wet; we have stockings, shirts, and whatever you may want for change, all warm and ready, if you will accept them." I thanked him, but said we had our garments on the mule. He then offered his help to take off our wet clothes, or for anything else he could do, and conducted us at once to our rooms, giving us two with three beds in each. The apartments were long enough to have the beds lengthways, with sufficient space to dress between. On the opposite side were three plain toilet tables, with ancient looking-glasses. The sides and ceiling were all deal, without a particle of paint. At the end was a small window, well secured, to bear the storms. The beds stood about four feet high from the floor, and had each two blankets, thick coverlets, and a *soufflet*, or down bed, to cover all. There was every needful comfort, but not the least luxury. We noticed everywhere an unpleasant odour, a prison-like atmosphere, probably caused by the necessity of so much exclusion of the fresh cold air.

On descending to the common hall, we mingled with about a dozen other travellers, fair and otherwise, round a large fire, and shortly had supper served. It consisted of soup, three or four kinds of meat, vegetables, dried fruits, nuts, etc., with some excellent wine, nine years old. Another monk now joined us, and did the honours of the table, these two having the duty of attending to travellers. Both were perfect gentlemen, easy in their deportment, and very attentive. They partook of the fare, filled our glasses, and drank with us quite socially.

After supper the other company retired, and we gathered, with the two monks, closer round the fire. The conversation was chiefly in Latin, as four of our number did not speak French, and our hosts, being Swiss, did not understand English. We learned that there were eight other monks, all Augustines, and a prior, in the house, but only one was a priest, and one had studied medicine. They were all young, or they could not have endured the climate. They took a vow of devotedness for ten years, but most, they said, became crippled with rheumatism and pulmonary affections before half the time had expired. When ill, they went to other establishments at Martigny and Sion. Our two monks, it appeared, had been eight years serving, but theirs were rare cases. They had, it turned out on farther inquiry, about forty male inmates, chiefly servants. All lived well, and no austerities were practised, as they always needed to keep up the utmost strength for their arduous duties. They had to go out every day on each side to keep the pass clear, and assist travellers in need. This duty was never omitted, unless the wind actually blew them down. They had fur garments, very thick for winter, and used every possible precaution, yet sometimes they could hardly avoid being frozen to death. Calamities were frequent. Only four years before, the

prior, with three fathers, three dogs, and three travellers, were swept away by an avalanche within a few minutes' distance of the house, and buried fourteen feet deep. Only a dog of the whole party escaped.

They gratuitously receive and relieve about 19,000 travellers annually. All at the monastery is free, but there is a poor-box in the chapel, where those who can afford it deposit what they please, and this is devoted to purchasing provision, clothing, etc. for the mass of the poor who stop here in their route. They have of course considerable endowments, and a large tablet on the stairs records the munificence of Napoleon when he passed this way and rested here with his army, in 1800. The institution was founded by a Savoyard nobleman, Bernard de Menthon, who built both this hospice and that of Little St. Bernard, and left to them all his property.

While we were conversing happily over the fire, our friend who had figured on the mule was suddenly taken ill, as if dying. The monks told us not to be alarmed, for it was only indigestion, arising from the climate, and was what they witnessed every day. They got him to his room, warmed his bed, rubbed him gently, and gave him sugared water; then showing me in the passage a great bell, and telling me to toll it twice in case he became worse, they bade us good night.

They were right. He slept well, and in the morning was as hearty as ever. For myself, anxiety about him kept me awake for awhile, listening to him and to a storm raging without, when I also dropped off, and awoke in the morning, saying to myself, "Well, this beats all; I have been sleeping in the monastery of St. Bernard!"

We had a good plain breakfast with eggs, but we remarked how soon the coffee got cold. It boils at 187°, and this low heat very quickly evaporates. A second cup from the same pot was hardly drinkable. It was only lukewarm. We visited the chapel, and in converse with the monks found them very liberal in sentiment. They remarked that the church simply consisted of those in every denomination who possessed faith in Christ; that they loved English protestants, for they had much feeling in religion, while the Swiss protestants were generally in a dead state. On our asking if singing in our own worship would disturb or be offensive, they said there was no restraint whatever for visitors; we might even have their chapel to ourselves for our morning exercise, but perhaps would feel more at liberty in one of our own rooms. They introduced us to other monks at study in their cells, which were very comfortable rooms, and artificially heated by steam from the kitchen. All the fathers were young men of mild and gentlemanly manners, dressed like ourselves, except a long black gown buttoned from top to bottom, with a diagonal band of white, and a similar band on their tall black caps. We thought it quite becoming.

There is, I may observe, a piano in the sitting-room, and every device to lessen the natural gloom of this desolate spot, which is about 8000 feet above the sea. At that time there were, I was told, only three of the celebrated dogs, but others were training in the mountains. These were

monsters in size, but perfectly gentle. One of them had saved, I think, seventeen lives. Their power of scenting the lost under the snow and digging them out is wonderful.

Before we left our kind friends, they took us to see the *morgue*, or dead-house for travellers who have perished. There cannot be graves here in the hard rock, and there is no putrefaction; so the bodies remain till recognised and removed, or the bones fall apart. The mother with her babe, mentioned by Cheever, is in a corner as distinct as ever. The up-turned eye and look to heaven are very affecting as she presses the infant to her bosom. There they will remain in death's embrace till dust returns to its dust.

On the other side of the monastery is a very high jagged rock, frequented in winter by the chamois. The monks have rifles, and sometimes fire at them; but they know their marksmen too well to fear them, and will stand even while fired at, as if laughing at their aim. Not one has ever been hit.

On registering our names, we found, only three days before, the acknowledgment of a gentleman who, with his wife and a nursing six weeks old, had slept there. He recorded with great gratitude the kindness experienced and the very special interest manifested by the monks in the babe. Dr. Cheever is wrong in stating that on Fridays there is only soup for supper. They assured us that, although a difference is made, travellers always have three or four dishes of meat served up both in the hall and in the kitchen. They can lodge two hundred at once, if needful. The thermometer that day at ten o'clock (in the height of summer, be it remembered) was 34°, or 2° above freezing. Perhaps this last fact will considerably cool the desire which the perusal of this account may have awakened to visit the highest habitation in Europe; but though our readers should never go and pay their personal respects to these friendly monks, it is no more than due to such devoted philanthropists that all benevolent people should know of their doings, which form an honourable exception to the mass of corrupt leaven that unhappily pervades the church to which they belong.

#### LEAVES AT THE YEAR'S CLOSE.

THE year is rapidly verging towards its close, reminding us of the flight of time, of the transitory condition of all earthly things, of all our joys and sorrows, and of the termination of our existence in the flesh, when we shall be sown in corruption, but raised—if the faithful followers of the Redeemer—in incorruption. These and similar reflections, trite no doubt, and trite because natural, passed through our mind, as we one morning strayed pensively about our garden; yet did they not so entirely absorb us as to prevent our noticing some of the phenomena passing around, and leading to other trains of thought, ending in the praise of the Almighty Power who "rules the varied year."

Let us look around. The garden, even in November, is not without interest. The sere and yellow leaves are falling in showers from the trees, and,



drifted by the wind, bestrew the gravelled paths, or are thrown into heaps in corners, cover flower-beds, and collect around the roots of shrubs and bushes. The flowers have faded, yet some there are which still "glint" bravely forth, as if struggling to the last against fate. Here and there a pale blossom of the monthly rose hangs upon its slender stem. The asters, the chrysanthemums, and the noble dahlia yet hold out, though traces of decay are too visible on every flower. The barberry bush hangs out its pendent streamers of wax-like, coral-red berries. The yew and the holly look greener than they did, and the berries of the latter are ruddy. Still green is the privet, and its bunches of berries are glossy black. The fruit of the vine has been gathered, and the few leaves which remain on the trained branches are stained with yellow and golden russet.

The leaves are falling! But these leaves have yet to serve an important purpose; they will cover the ground below as with a garment, and thus afford protection from the cold to the buried bulbs, and to the roots of other plants which need warmth during the winter. But this is not all; they serve another purpose: as the spring returns, with its mild showers and warm sun, they fall into decomposition and afford a rich manure to the roots which they had protected during the severer season. They form a fine vegetable mould, a top-dressing to the subjacent soil, and add greatly to its fertility. Well does the gardener know the value of decomposed vegetable matter as manure; and one reason why many of our rarer wild flowers, as the orchis, seldom flourish when introduced into a garden, is the deficiency in the soil of pure vegetable mould; for gardens are usually cleared from time to time of their leafy "litter," while in our woods and copses, our hedge-rows and rough spots under trees or bushes, the decaying foliage remains where it fell, and year after year adds a supply of fresh nutriment. Thus it is that nature, so to speak, carries forward a mighty work. It is thus that a thin coating of vegetable mould is spread over the surface of the rock, and added unto, year by year, till plants of a higher order succeed to the lichens which first began to creep over its once naked surface; while these again in their turn add to the increase of the fertile layer.

The leaves are falling! But here let us pause, and ask, What is a leaf? Few perhaps have considered the subject. Every leaf is in itself a distinct individual; moreover, the blossoms themselves are but *leaves*, modified and destined for a special purpose. A tree, like a compound zoophyte, is a colony of individuals bound into a community or body corporate by means of the living bark, inclosing and producing a wooden skeleton. The leaves, like the polypes of the beautiful red coral, or the sea-fan, are distinct from each other, yet united by means of a living tissue of communication, which commenced its development in the seed, in the pip, in the acorn, or the beech-mast. Again, as in the polypes of the coral, some are destined for nutrition, others for reproduction, so, in the tree or shrub, some of the leaves are destined as organs of respiration and for the digestion of the fluids conveyed to them through the inner bark; these they convert into bitters or sweets,

nutriment or poison, to man and animals. Other leaves are modified, and become what we term flowers, exhaling delicious odours or repulsive effluvia. These flowers are destined for the continuance of the species. Professor E. Forbes, says:—"We are not in the habit of regarding a leaf as the individual: popularly we look upon the whole plant as an individual; yet every botanist knows that it (the plant) is a combination of individuals, and if so, each series of buds must be strictly regarded as generations."

No leaf falls until a provision is made for a successor. Let us take a twig, say of the lilac, and examine it. Now at the *axil* of the leaf, that is, at its inner angle of junction with the twig, we behold a bud developed which was not there when the now fading leaf burst forth in its original freshness. This bud may expand at a future day into leaves only, or it may inclose the germ of that modification of leaves which we call a flower. Thus, then, during their prime are the leaves provided with successors. Their work is over; they fall and perish. The tree now begins to hybernate; the bark sleeps, for as there are no leaves, the activity of the food-bearing vessels composing the inner rind of the bark would be to no purpose. With respect to the woody skeleton, it can scarcely be said to possess organic life. Of the pith we know little; yet in the younger branches of such trees as the elder, which inclose it in abundance, and at this time in a juicy state, (though it becomes dry afterwards,) it evidently subserves some important function. This pith is most vigorous and abundant in young and growing branches; some have deemed it the seat of that irritability which many plants so remarkably display. Others have supposed it to be a reservoir of moisture, forming a supply to the leaves, whenever an excess of perspiration renders such assistance necessary. Mr. Knight (Phil. Trans. 1801, p. 348) states that he has actually traced a distinct communication by vessels between it and the leaf. "Plants," he says, "seem to require some such reservoir, for their young leaves are excessively tender: they perspire much, and cannot, like animals, fly to the shade or brook." In aquatic beings, like the corallines or zoophytes, no such reservoir is needed.

On the contrary, Dr. Smith observes that all the pith in a whole twig is in some cases too little to supply one hour's perspiration for a single leaf. I cannot find, he adds, that "the moisture of the pith varies, let the leaves be ever so flaccid; I incline therefore to the opinion that the pith is rather a reservoir of vital energy, even in those bulbous-rooted grasses in which, as in the common cat's-tail, it is peculiarly observable." It is a singular fact that the common cat's-tail (*phleum pratense*), when growing in pastures that are remarkably moist, has a *fibrous* root; but that in dry situations, or such as are only occasionally wet, it acquires a *bulbous* root, the inner substance of which is moist and fleshy, like the pith of the young branches of trees, as if it were a provision by way of securing the plant against the too sudden privation of moisture from the soil.

The leaves are falling! Having fulfilled their duties, like all organic beings, they lose vitality, and are scattered by the winds from off the bark

or rind, between which and themselves a line of demarcation is drawn: at that precise point the sap vessels have become obliterated. Thus deprived of all supply, they wither and perish.

"Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;  
So generations in their turn decay;  
So flourish these when those have passed away."

#### A MICROSCOPIC ENTERTAINMENT.

MAN seems to tenant a position between two material worlds; the one of infinite and unfathomable vastness and immensity, stretching away beyond the limits of even thought itself into an eternity of space; the other of inconceivable minuteness, so small that a whole dynasty is seen fulfilling the conditions of its being in a single drop of water, and a million of its inhabitants filling a space in creation no larger than that occupied by a single grain of sand. For the major part of the knowledge we have obtained of both these worlds—and as yet we have made a little progress in the one as the other—we are indebted to two instruments, the telescope and the microscope. It is at the latter only that, on the present occasion, we shall take a cursory glance. Under the general denomination of "microscope" are included a variety of instruments, some of them of the cheapest and simplest form, and others of the most costly and scientific. Thus, a piece of card blackened with ink and punctured with a single pin-hole, is a microscope, because by looking through it, it virtually magnifies an object by enabling you to see it nearer than you could do with the naked eye, though it is barely available for anything larger than a fly's foot. If you make the puncture a trifle larger, and melt a piece of glass (first drawn out thin as a hair in the fire) in the flame of a gas-lamp, adroitly pushing it farther into the flame as it liquefies, until it becomes a little round knob, and insert that knob into the hole in the card, you will have a microscope of the next degree of power. This is as far as you can go gratuitously. Then you can buy the Stanhope lens for a crown, and with that you may make observations really interesting; but if you wish to pursue microscopic science with advantage, you must go to the expense of an instrument purely achromatic, magnifying some hundreds of times, and (what is of more importance than mere magnifying power, for which your man of science cares less than the sight-seer) defining clearly and truthfully: this last is the triumph of the optician—an instrument that tells the truth severely. Microscopes deserving this high character are necessarily very expensive, a single lens costing several guineas. The real value of a good instrument, however, is beyond all price, because it is a key to a new world of wonders, teeming with novelties never to be exhausted. Beyond these, which are all of a conveniently portable kind, and opening a much more extensive field of observation, is the oxy-hydrogen microscope, which, embodying the principles of the magic-lantern, can be made to magnify millions of times; but it has this great disadvantage, that it exhibits the magnified shadows of the objects, and not the objects

themselves; and though, when these are transparent, some degree of colour is obtained, positive truth of colour can scarcely be relied on.

These few remarks may serve perhaps as an introduction to a microscopic entertainment to which, having lately been a guest ourselves, we shall take the liberty of introducing the reader.

On entering, we find a series of tables set out with a number of microscopes of good defining power, and furnished with subjects, some of them novel in description, and all of an interesting kind. Everybody—and everybody in this instance signifies a crowded attendance of ladies and gentlemen—is anxious for a peep, and as only one can peep at a time at one object, all have an opportunity of exercising that patience which is so characteristic of polite society. We pop down our head at a venture at the first vacant eye-glass, and behold! the lung of a toad, which shows like a crimson mass of virgin cinnabar, with a gnarled and rather nuggetty surface, permeated everywhere with a myriad of small air-cells: the intensity of the red-hot colour, broken with its own shadowy reflections, constitutes this an object of remarkable beauty, independent of the marvels of its structure, which, as a fair lady is nudging our elbow, we have not time to dwell upon.

But here is another tube unoccupied, and we try again. What is this we see? Upon a circular expanse of rose-coloured soil, speckled all over with points and spots of deeper hue, a thousand little brooks, rivulets, and canals are pouring their flashing waters with furious haste into larger channels, in which again they rush along with a velocity that threatens to wash away the banks. On goes the torrent, glistening and sparkling in the intense light, never pausing in its furious haste, but from unnumbered tiny trenches pouring into the main ducts, and travelling, ever faster the larger the channel, towards some outlet beyond the field of vision. What can this be? On looking to ascertain, we find it is a view of the circulation of the blood in the toe of a frog—froggy having consented, for reasons sufficiently powerful, to lie in a moist bag, and to suffer as much of that useful member of his as could be seen through an orifice of some sixteenth of an inch in diameter to be subjected to investigation for the benefit of science. The devoted professor of gymnastics lies perfectly quiet, but, looking to the galloping current in his veins, we suspect that he is paying for his complaisance by symptoms decidedly feverish.

Now for a third peep. Not willing to be taken by surprise this time, we look at the object first, but can see nothing more than a dim grey speck of something about the size of a small pin's head. But on placing one eye at the tube, lo and behold! what seems a sepia drawing admirably finished in all its details, of a view on the Seine at Paris—a view of a bridge over which we have walked a hundred times in days gone by—of boats and buildings, and surrounding objects, true to the very life, and defying us not to recognise the spot with all its details. Of course we know at once that no artist could have drawn this picture, and that it is a photograph painted by the agency of light. But the marvel is great, notwithstanding, and we look again and again, now at the all but invisible picture itself, now at its magnified proportions as

seen through the microscope, and should look much longer but for considerations of good manners. This, it strikes us, is the severest test to which photography could be applied; and it seems almost incomprehensible that upon a surface not larger than one of the letters of this page, can be represented the perspective of a broad river, its bridges and the buildings which rise upon its banks.

A fourth peep gives us the surface of a piece of granite, which shows like a spotty and transparent assemblage of rich and varied colours: a fifth and a sixth, and so on, reveal various objects more or less favourites for the exquisite colours or curious textures, or marvellous systems of growth and increase, which they display. Then we come to a microscopic apparatus on the magic-lantern principle, but on a portable scale, by which the shadows of objects are thrown upon a white disk. A series of them are shown in succession, the most amusing being the exhibition of the monsters generated in foul water, the whimsical motions of which excite not a little laughter. The sight of these gentry whizzing about in such a fantastic manner recalls to our recollection certain displays of the same kind, but on a grander scale, which we once witnessed at a private exhibition of the oxygen-hydrogen microscope. At the end of a large room containing about two hundred persons, a white canvass sheet was tightly strained; the microscope, standing in a gallery at the other end, projected the objects to be seen, over the heads of the spectators, on the white sheet—the room being in darkness, with the exception of such reflected light as proceeded from the illuminated disk. Upon this disk first appeared, swimming leisurely in the clear water, a huge monster about the size of an average bull, opening with deliberation a cavernous mouth every now and then to admit some smaller fry which were disporting around him, and which he swallowed up as the merest matter of course, hardly deigning to look at them. The creature seemed nearly all head and tail, and bore an aspect indescribably ugly and terrific; and yet, monster as he was compared to his diminutive victims, he would himself be invisible even under the power of a microscope magnifying a hundred times. A second drop of water revealed, to all appearance, the depths of an abyss in which masses of vegetation hung in suspension; tangled water-weeds floated towards the surface, and beneath their gloomy shadows lurked fierce shark-like destroyers, measuring six feet or more in length, watching their opportunity to dart out upon an unwary innocent and gobble him up. This they did repeatedly, and one could but admire the rapidity of their digestion, which disposed of a living meal in a minute or two of our time. The whole abyss was swarming with life; but we may fairly conclude that over-population was prevented by the presence of the devouring gentry alluded to, of whom we noticed six or seven taking exceeding good care of themselves—a startling illustration of the universal law.

Another change, and an anomalous creature, to be paralleled in no department of *visible* nature, appears upon the scene: it is nothing less in form and mechanism than a living telescope—a creature whose body consists positively of a succession of

tubes shutting up one within the other, and who possesses the power of drawing out any or all of them, and thus increasing or diminishing his stature to suit his own personal convenience. His head terminates the smallest tube. He is a greedy fellow, constantly on the look-out for prog; now, for the sake of reaching a victim, elongating his body to the extent of sixteen feet; now, perhaps for convenience of swallow, contracting it to that of about eighteen inches; and when stretched out is so transparent that you may see the fluids circulating in his frame.

We might multiply these marvels, which the microscope opens to our contemplation, almost *ad infinitum*, but that is not our object, nor would it be quite fair to those of our readers, of whom we are aware there are not a few who know this subject well. Our design is rather to present to those who have the desire to study the works of nature in her minutest operations, some samples of the harvest they may expect to reap in the intelligent prosecution of such a pursuit.

#### TALK WITH TIME AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

##### I.

TIME, old Time, with the forelock gray,  
While the year in its dotage doth pass away,  
Come, sit by my hearth, ere the embers fail,  
And hang thy scythe on yon empty nail,  
And tell me a tale 'neath this wintry sky  
Of the deeds thou hast done as its months swept by.

##### II.

"I have cradled the babe in the churchyard wide;  
From the husband's arms I have carried the bride;  
I have cloven a path through the ocean's floor,  
Where many have sunk to return no more;  
I have humbled the strong with their dauntless breast,  
And laid the old with his staff to rest.

##### III.

"I have loosen'd the stone on the ruin's height,  
Where the curtaining ivy grew rank and bright;  
I have startled the maid in her couch of down,  
With a sprinkle of white 'mid her tresses brown;  
I have rent from his idols the proud man's hold,  
And scatter'd the board of the miser's gold."

##### IV.

Is this all? Are thy chronicles traced alone  
On the riven heart and the burial-stone?  
"No; Love's young chain I have twined with flowers,  
Have awaken'd a song in the rose-crown'd bowers;  
Proud trophies have rear'd to the sons of fame,  
And paved the road for the cars of flame.

##### V.

"Look to yon child; it hath learn'd of me  
The word that it lispeth at the mother's knee;  
Look to the sage, who from me hath caught  
Intenser fire for his heavenward thought;  
Look to the saint, who hath nearer trod  
Towards the angel hosts near the throne of God.

##### VI.

"I have planted seeds in the soul, that bear  
The fruits of heav'n in a world of care;  
I have breathed on the tear till its orb grew bright  
As the diamond drop in the realms of light:  
Question thy heart, hath it e'er confest  
A germ so pure, or a tear so blest?"

##### VII.

But the clock struck twelve from the steeple gray,  
And he seized his hour-glass, and strode away;  
Yet his hand at parting I fear'd to clasp,  
For I saw the scythe in its earnest grasp,  
And read in the glance of his upward eye  
His secret league with Eternity.

## Varieties.

## WILBERFORCE AND CARLILE THE INFIDEL.

I REMEMBER Wilberforce relating a remarkable circumstance concerning Carlile the infidel. "The wretched creature," said he, "was then in prison at Dorchester, having been prosecuted for his vile and infamous publications. As I was then visiting at the house of a magistrate in the neighbourhood, I thought I should like to see the prisoner and converse with him, perfectly *incog*. After some general conversation, I learned from him something of his former life, and found that he had formerly been among the Wesleyan Methodists, and even a class-leader. I then began to speak on the subject of religion. He said he did not wish to enter on that topic, for he had long ago made up his mind, and did not wish to have it disturbed; and, seeing me take out my little Bible, he said, 'I wish to have nothing to do with that book; and you cannot wonder at this, for if that book be true, I am damned for ever.' I was shocked, and said, 'No, no, Mr. Carlile, according to that book, there is hope for all who will seek for mercy and forgiveness; for it assures us that God hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth.' I also said more, but it seemed to have no effect at the time, and I knew not that it had any afterwards. But," added he, "we see (as we are needing hope) how desirable and necessary it is that there should always be an obvious and powerful ground for it; that despair hardens even more than presumption; and that men live so as to make the Bible their enemy, and then hate it because it does not prophecy good concerning them, but evil."

I cannot help adding a circumstance not irrelevant to this occurrence. Preaching, one Tuesday evening, at Surrey Chapel, after his (Mr. Carlile's) release from prison, I mentioned in my sermon the above anecdote. When I came down from the pulpit, some one told me that Carlile had been hearing me, and insisted upon seeing me. I said, "By all means; desire him to come into the vestry." He entered; I arose and received him courteously, and gave him my hand, remembering that "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be patient towards all men, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if haply God might give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." I asked him for what purpose he wished to see me. He said, "I do not charge you with intentional misrepresentation, but I have heard you say this evening what is not true." Then stating what I had related, I said, "Are you sure this is not true?" "I am: I am certain Mr. Wilberforce never conversed with me, or saw me in prison." "Do you know Mr. Wilberforce personally?" "I do not. I look upon him as a bigoted but very good and benevolent man; but I am sure I never saw him." "Well, as you never saw him, how are you sure that, among others who visited you, he never saw you in your confinement; especially as his design was to keep himself unknown? Do you think," said I, "Wilberforce would forge a letter, or utter a serious falsehood?" "No, I think he would not." "And as for myself," I said, "I am sure I have accurately reported his relation, for I received it in writing at the time." This rather softened and silenced him, and he only murmured, "Well, I remember nothing of it."

I desired him to be seated, and said, "I should be glad, Mr. Carlile, to have a little further conversation," to which he seemed disposed; but some of his disciples, who had followed him into the vestry, rudely urged him to come away; saying, "These gospel-preachers will say anything that serves their purpose."—*Life of Rev. W. Jay.*

## PARTING COUNSELS.

OUR great interests, if we have any great interests, or any that are much worth regarding, are on the subject of religion. If this be so, then religion is the last thing that should remain unsettled and undetermined. It can make very little difference to a man whether he is rich or poor,

honoured or despised, sick or well, a bondman or a slave. Whether there is an eternity or not, these things are comparatively of trifling moment. How soon is the most exquisite earthly pleasure passed! The charms of the sweetest melody, how soon they die away on the ear! The tenderest ties of friendship, how soon are they severed! The most splendid mansion, how soon it must be left! The widest reputation, how soon must we cease to enjoy it! And so with the bitterest grief, the keenest sorrow, the most agonizing pain, how soon it is all gone! Whether we are rich or poor, honoured or dishonoured, life is like a vapour that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. Of what importance can it be to the vapour that you see in the morning as it lies on the mountain side, whether it be admired by a few more or a few less mortals, or whether it roll a little higher, or sink a little lower, since it must soon vanish in the beams of the morning sun? So of the vapour of life.

If man has any great interests, they lie beyond the tomb. If he has none there, life is a bubble, a vapour, a gorgeous illusion, a changing cloud, a mist on the mountain side. And if this be so, it is as well for a man to make up his mind to it, and to eat and drink, for to-morrow he dies. Then he should ascertain this, and have no trouble about the future. He should settle the question, and make as much of luxury and pastime, of the feast and the dance, of the theatre and the ball-rooms, of riotous indulgence and of ambition, as possible. He should so settle it as to have no trouble from his conscience in the most riotous pleasures; no fear of God in the scenes of sensual indulgence and mirth; no fear of hell while he revels on the bounties which chance may spread around him; no superstitious apprehensions of a judgment-seat while he rolls in dissipation and tramples on the rights of others. For if there is no eternity, it is utter folly to act with reference to it; if there is no hell, it is folly to be restrained by any such unfounded apprehension; if there is no God, then men should not be disturbed by any superstitious belief that his eye is upon them. But if there is a God, a heaven, a hell, an eternity, then life becomes a very different thing. Then man's great interests are transferred at once to the regions beyond the grave. Then life, now so busy and active, becomes so trifling, that it may be said that ALL his interests are there. The great things which are to affect us most deeply do not cease, but just commence, when we lie down on a bed of death. There, amidst the darkness of the dying scene, existence is just begun; and there we are just entering on the scene which must thrill through the soul, and absorb all its powers for ever. Then, the eyes turned away from the gorgeousness of the illusive scene here—the vain pageant of this world—are opened upon the realities of the judgment-bar, the throne of God, and the splendours of the unchanging world. Then, the ear made deaf by dying to the charms of sweet music, is opened to the sweet strains that float for ever over the plains of heaven, or the groans and sighs of the world of woe. Then the soul, sensible no longer to the comforts or the sorrows of this life, no longer affected by the pleasures of friendship, or the evils of poverty, want, or pain, is made alive at once to the bliss of eternal love in heaven, or to the deep sorrows of that world of despair that shall endure for ever. And if this be so, then whatever other interests you may neglect, assuredly *this* should not be disregarded. Whatever else may be undecided, this should be settled. If a choice were to be made, assuredly better to let health suffer than the soul die; better to be a bankrupt than be damned; better be without reputation here, than to meet the ever-enduring wrath of God; better suffer your name to be blackened and calumniated, than to sink beneath the avenging arm of Jehovah; better let men kill the body, than to fall unprepared into the hands of that God who can destroy both soul and body in hell.—*Barnes's Practical Sermons.* (Routledge & Co.) An admirable collection of discourses, which we recommend to the perusal of our readers.



